To My
Dear
Mother

Postcard to Mrs. Esther Smith in Roseburg, Oregon, May 1906

From the Wells Smith Steel Box

"TO MY DEAR MOTHER"

Embossed greeting postcard addressed to Mrs. Esther Smith in Roseburg, Oregon, postmarked Reston, Oregon — May 18, 1906. Most likely from her daughter Lillie Leane Smith.

Lillie addresses Esther as "Dear Mamma" and gives a small snapshot of daily life: she plans to send more cards, says she has been "on the bum" and feels nervous, mentions picking strawberries, and urges her mother to go to the circus and have some fun. "On the bum" was common slang for being unsettled or living rough for a time, which fits the tone here.

This card was mailed one month after the April 18, 1906 San Francisco earthquake—a useful timeline marker in the larger postcard set. Other cards indicate that another of Esther's daughters, Millie, and her husband were in San Francisco during the earthquake and lost their home in the fire that followed. It raises a question: when this card was sent, did Esther and Lillie already know Millie was safe, or were they still waiting for word?

— JH

POST CARD

RESTO
MAY
18
P.M.
1906
OREGON

U.S. POSTAGE
ONE CENT

MOTTO SERIES NO.

THIS SPACE MAY BE USED FOR WRITING

Dear Mamma- I will send you a card today. Two more weeks after this one - then, I don't know what will be next. I have been on the burn, and am yet. I am as nervous as I can be. I picked a few straw berries yesterday.

Be sure and go to the circus and have some fun for me. I guess the children are all going. How are all?

THIS SIDE FOR THE ADDRESS ONLY

Mrs. Esther Smith
Roseburg
Oregon

To My
Dear
Mother

POST CARD

PRESTON OREGON
MAY 18 P.M. 1906

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Dear Mamma. I will send you a card to day. Two more weeks after this one - then, I don't know what will be next. I have been on the burn, and am yet. I am as nervous as I can be. I picked a few straw berries yesterday.

Be sure and go to the circus and have some fun for me. I guess the children are all going. How are all?

MOTTO SERIES NO. I

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Mrs. Esther Smith
Roseburg
Oregon